

# ADAMS



## Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.

P.O. Box 247, 4800 St. Rte. 125  
West Union, OH 45693  
Phone: 937-544-2305  
Toll-free 1-800-283-1846

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Kenneth McCann ..... Secretary  
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### Pay stations

Failure to receive your electric bill in no way relieves you, the member, from paying it. If you do not receive your bill, contact the office before the due date and we will issue another.

For the convenience of Adams REC members, we have established several ways to pay your bill:

Pay online at [www.adamsrec.com](http://www.adamsrec.com).

Pay by phone at 1-800-809-6352.

Pay directly from your bank account.

Pay at these collection points:

The 5/3 Bank of Southern Ohio  
Manchester, Peebles, West Union

The First State Bank of Adams County  
Manchester, Seaman, Winchester,  
Peebles and West Union

The National Bank of Adams County  
218 N. Market St., West Union

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

## Ups and downs of the job

There are many aspects I enjoy about working for the cooperative. I have met many wonderful people and I am always learning something new, whether it's a new technology or just something new that I haven't run across during my tenure here. The job does have its frustrating moments, though. The worst no doubt is dealing with delinquent

accounts and service disconnections for nonpayment.

I understand that times are hard, and we all have been there at one time or another. A large percentage of consumers pay a penalty every month for a delinquent account. In some cases they could pay an entire month's electric bill for the amount of penalties they accumulate in one year.

This winter has been worse than most because of the cold weather we have experienced. During January and February, 42 of the 59 days were below the average normal temperature—31 of those days didn't make it above freezing—which resulted in much higher heating bills than previous years.

We must have policies in place for the collection of electric bills that are past due. As a business, we must protect against lost revenue in order to maintain a stable financial status so that we can continue to provide electricity to all of our members. Regardless of our efforts, we still had unpaid accounts in excess of \$78,000 in 2009. Your cooperative must pay for the electricity used, even if the consumer doesn't. Since the only revenue that the cooperative generates comes from you, the member, the cost of those delinquent accounts is also borne by you, the member. The cost of electricity will continue to increase in the future and no doubt the amount of unpaid accounts also will rise.

Unfortunately, neither you nor Adams REC can control the rising energy costs. We can only attempt to keep our costs as low as possible. In that respect, sometimes I think I sound like a broken record, but energy efficiency is the only major thing that a consumer can do to reduce their electric bill. New energy-efficient appliances, along with installation of heat pumps, proper insulation of your home and making sure that your windows and doors have a tight seal are important in reducing your energy costs.

Here are some things you can do and that don't cost you anything but will reduce your electric use: Turn off lights when you're not in a room, reduce the thermostat of your home heat source a couple of degrees, set your water heater thermostat at 120 degrees, and unplug apparatuses that aren't in use. Items such as phone chargers, computers, microwaves and any other device that uses a remote will use energy even though not being operated. Unless you unplug these devices, they will continue to use energy.

Remember, it is always best to address a problem before it becomes a major issue. The best time to contact the office if you are in a bind is before your service is due to be disconnected. We may be able to help. You may be eligible for a payment arrangement plan for your account. Also, there are area agencies that may be able to offer assistance. In any event, it is always best to stay in contact with us. Addressing the problem before your service is disconnected will be beneficial to both you and the cooperative.

### General Manager's Report by Bill Swango



# This-N-That

by ALICE L. BAIRD

## Spring

Last year, the major topic of discussion was the January/February ice storm. This year it is the tremendous amount of snow we received in February. I could probably take a nice vacation if I had a nickel for every time I heard someone say, "I'm tired of the snow," "I'm sick of the snow," "I've had enough of this" or "I can't wait until summer."

According to statistics, we had record snowfall amounts for February. I was just glad I didn't live on the East Coast! I admit that it was very inconvenient at times and we all probably have a story to tell, but I am so grateful it wasn't ice! Actually, the snow falling was beautiful at times. Of course, I didn't like to travel in it anymore than anyone else. We did get our car stuck in the driveway and that was no fun. 1334100005

I guess I kind of look at it like this: If life hands you lemons, make lemonade; if the Lord gives us this much snow, make snow cream! I had some really good snow cream this year. It reminded me of when I was a kid and Mom would make a big batch in the big blue roaster pan. Yum, yum. Of course I had all kinds of advice about eating snow and how unhealthy it is, but I figured if I'm still alive after eating all the processed foods when I don't even know what I am eating, then a little snow surely won't kill me off. Nevertheless, just like everyone around me, I welcome the spring, and just maybe I won't complain about the heat this summer.

## Science fair

One of the Seven Cooperative Principles is: Concern for Community. At Adams Rural Electric we make donations and sponsor various activities in the community. We especially like to promote interest in the students in this area. We have the Scholarship Program and the Youth Tour Program. We also participate in other activities as they are presented. Chris Koenig, Adams REC's manager of Purchasing, Metering and Safety, and I were privileged to participate in judging the Adams County

## Hidden account number credit

Find **your** account number in the LOCAL PAGES (the four center pages of this magazine), then call our office and you will receive a \$20 credit on your electric bill. You must call by the end of the month in which your account number appears.

## Capital credits

Capital credits refunded to the estates of Adams Rural Electric Co-op members for February 2010 totaled \$10,115.81. Estates paid in 2010 total \$21,138.42.

In case of the death of a member of Adams Rural Electric, contact Alice Baird at 937-544-2305 or 800-283-1846.

Jr./Sr. High Science Fair. We really enjoyed viewing the various projects the students presented and discussing with them how they came to their conclusions.

I have said it before and I will say it now: We have some very bright young people in our area. I am proud to think that some of these students will become researchers, doctors, attorneys, educators and maybe linemen, CEOs, accountants or customer service representatives—and, yes, even politicians. Parents, continue to encourage your children to be the best they can be. Students, keep up the good work. There is nothing you cannot accomplish if you focus and work hard; you can achieve your dreams.

## Fixed Budget Billing Plan

Adams REC offers its members a Fixed Budget Billing Plan. The primary purpose of the plan is to pay the same amount on your bill each month with a settlement month. The June billing is considered the settlement month, or end of budget year, in which case the account must be paid in full based on the actual kilowatts used during the year. If a credit exists on your account at the time of settlement, it will be applied to your next billing. The budget amount will be adjusted annually with the July billing to reflect the prior 12 months' use. You will be notified of the new budget amount on your June bill.

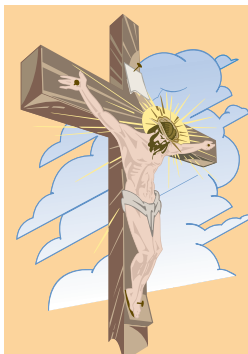
Please remember that the Fixed Budget Billing Plan amount is due in full each month. Failure to pay the full amount may result in termination of the agreement. If you would like to be set up on the Fixed Budget Billing Plan, please contact the billing department. The account must be paid in full before the budget can be established.

## Reminders

Remember that failure to receive your bill in no way relieves you, the member, from paying it. If you do not receive your bill, contact the office billing department before the due date and we will issue you another bill.

Adams Rural Electric will be closed on April 2 in observance of Good Friday. I hope that you all have a blessed Easter.

As always, if you need information concerning the youth programs, calendar of events or capital credits or have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at the office. Just ask for Alice.



**Adams Rural Electric Co-op will be closed April 2 in observance of Good Friday.**

Should an emergency arise, call the outage number: 937-544-2305.

# Your cooperative

by ALICE L. BAIRD

This past winter was hard on everyone. The prolonged cold weather, with weeks of below-freezing temperatures, caused everyone's heating bills to rise. We saw many days in January and February when the temperature did not rise out of the teens or perhaps stayed in the single digits. We may turn our thermostat back a few degrees, but the plain fact is that when the temperature is that low outside, the furnaces or heaters are going to run and run a lot. So, whether you were on Adams Rural Electric lines or other lines, such as AEP or Duke Energy, everyone saw a jump in their electric bills.

I talk to many people who want to compare Adams REC with other electric companies. They feel the rates are much lower with other companies. The truth is that the cost of electricity is rising for every consumer, no matter what company you are serviced by.

There are differences between your cooperative and investor-owned utilities (IOUs) such as AEP and Duke Energy. The basic difference is that investors own IOUs while the members own cooperatives. IOUs are profit driven, so they must satisfy their investors, while the cooperative's goal is not to make a profit but to cover expenses.

Since we do not have investors, all revenue that comes in to operate your cooperative comes from you, the consumer. There are tremendous costs involved in operating a distribution utility: the poles, lines, transformers, equipment, trucks, fuel, office and administrative expenses and taxes, just to point out a few. The power itself presents a big expense; the power bill for Adams REC is usually well in excess of a half million dollars each month. The power is purchased by the cooperative and must be paid for even when consumers fail to pay their bill. There are also substantial costs involved in maintaining the power system and in restoration when the system is damaged, as was the case in last year's ice storm.

Another difference in cooperatives and IOUs is the volume of people being served. Cooperatives average 6.6 consumers per mile of line, while IOUs average 34 consumers per mile of line. Also, the majority of cooperative service is to residences and farms, while the majority of the IOUs' business is with commercial and industrial customers. Yet your cooperative pays about the same for equipment, poles, wire, fuel, vehicles, etc. These costs are not discounted for cooperatives. We still pay.

The 25 electric distribution cooperatives serving Ohio (one is based in Michigan) serve 40 percent of the land area in the state of Ohio. Much of that land consists of wooded areas and hard-to-reach locations. While cooperatives serve nearly half the land area, they serve only about 6 percent of the people. The remainder of the state, with 94 percent of the population, is served by eight

investor-owned and 85 municipal electric providers.

Because of the difference in sheer volume between IOUs and cooperatives, it would be impractical to try to compare them.

Cooperatives were created because the big power companies said the distances were too far to make serving the rural communities economical. So until the 1930s and '40s, Ohio's rural communities were left in the dark, so to speak. The rural people at that time rose up to form their own power companies in the form of cooperatives: people cooperating to benefit each other. As a cooperative, it is important to note that the governing of the business is not in the hands of far-off strangers, but in the hands of an elected board of directors who are also members. The trustees of your cooperative are your neighbors and have as much at stake as you. They strive to make sound decisions that will keep the lights on for all of us. You have the privilege each year to vote for those who serve as the board of trustees.

Your cooperative management and board of trustees have worked hard to cut costs and to implement cost-saving measures at Adams REC. We understand the hardships that our economy and the rough winter have caused our members. Our goal is to strive to keep costs down and to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity to all of our members.

**WE MADE PAYING YOUR BILL EASIER**  
**3 ways to pay with:**

**NO STAMPS!**      **NO ENVELOPES!**      **NO DRIVING!**

- ONLINE AT OUR WEB SITE
- BY PHONE
- DIRECT PAYMENT

**FROM YOUR BANK ACCOUNT**

\*Pay online at [www.adamsrec.com](http://www.adamsrec.com); just click on the "Pay Your Bill" link and follow the instructions. You can pay by credit/debit card or from your checking/savings account.

\*Pay by phone with our Payment Hotline. Dial 1-800-809-6352 and follow the directions. You can pay by credit/debit card or from your checking/savings account.

\*Call the office to sign up for Direct Payment from your bank account.

If you have any questions, call the office at 937-544-2305.

# Avoid outdoor electrical hazards at home and at work

The arrival of spring brings warmer weather and an increase in outdoor work, both on the job and at home. Increasing electrical safety awareness can help ensure those activities do not result in injuries and deaths, according to the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI). ESFI notes that following safety rules can reduce electrical deaths and injuries:

Ladders that contact a power line can prove fatal, even if the ladder is made of wood.

Unplug outdoor tools and appliances when not in use.

Inspect power tools and appliances for frayed cords, broken plugs and cracked or broken housing and repair or replace damaged items.

Water does not mix with electricity. Avoid damp conditions, including wet grass when using electricity.

## Power line safety

ESFI also encourages those on the job to look up, look

down and look out for electrical safety hazards. On average, 325 people die and 4,400 are injured each year because of electrical hazards, according to data published by the National Safety Council. Electricity ranks sixth among all causes of occupational fatalities. The leading cause of fatal electrical incidents while on the job is contact with power lines, both above and below ground.

Workers using ladders or scaffolds, and those carrying aluminum siding, poles, fencing and even lumber, need to be aware and stay clear of power lines. Such contacts caused approximately 22 percent of the work-related fatalities over a seven-year period, according to research ("Occupational Electrical Injuries in the U.S., 1992-1998," published in the *Journal of Safety Research*).

Eliminating power line contacts with equipment such as cranes, boom trucks and dump trucks could reduce workplace electrical fatalities by another 17 percent annually, the study suggests.

## Adams County area calendar of events

### APRIL

- 3 **Children's Easter Egg Hunt** — Rain or snow date: Apr. 10, Children's Home. Contact: Sharon Rivers 937-544-2511.
- 3 & 4 **Adams County Trade Days** — Adams County Fairground, 868 Boyd Ave., West Union. Contact: Connie McDonald 937-217-1522 or Nathan Vogel 513-256-8370.
- 17 **Northern Adams County History Bus Tour.** Contact: Lynn Newman 937-587-3358 or Mary Fulton 937-587-2043.
- 17 & 18 **Fourth Annual Wildflower Pilgrimage of Southern Ohio** — Choose among over two dozen field trips to botanical hot spots in southern Ohio (Adams, Highland, Pike and Ross counties). Arc of Appalachia Preserve System. Call 937-365-0101 or visit [www.highlandssanctuary.org](http://www.highlandssanctuary.org).
- 24 **Ohio Brush Creek Sweep** — Along Ohio Brush Creek. Interested participants should contact Bill Wickerham at Adams County Soil & Water, 544-5121.
- 24 **Bentonville Anti-Horse Thief Society Banquet** — 7 p.m., Bentonville. Contact: Verna Naylor 937-549-3360.
- 30-May 2 **Flora-Quest** — Shawnee State Park and Forest and Edge of Appalachia. To learn more: [www.flora-quest.com](http://www.flora-quest.com).

### MAY

- 1 **Adams County Long Beards & Dave McCartney Free Fishing Day** — noon-4 p.m., food and games for kids. Adams County Lake, West Union. Contact Eugenia Grooms at 937-549-4078 or Kevin Willet at 937-544-2721.
- 7-9 **Mother's Day at Goodseed Farm** — 8 a.m.-6 p.m., Goodseed Farm, 200 Storer Rd. Peebles. Contact: Steve Boehme at 937-587-7021 or [steve@goodseedfarm.com](mailto:steve@goodseedfarm.com).
- 14 **Wheat Ridge Amish School Benefit Auction & Supper** — Supper at 4 p.m. and auction at 5 Ridgeway Lumber, contact 937-544-7566.
- 28, 29 & 31 **Amish Memorial Day Sale Miller's Bakery & Furniture.** 960 Wheat Ridge Rd., West Union.
- 29 **Wheat Ridge Art Market Arts & Crafts Sale** — 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Miller's Bakery & Furniture, 960 Wheat Ridge Rd., West Union. Presented by the Adams County Art Council. Contact J.R. Bradley at 937-544-4620 or Wheat Ridge Art Gallery at 937-544-1300